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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the proposal by the United Kingdom government to introduce a performance management policy as the basis for organizing management and remuneration of teachers. The performance management model is firmly embedded within the dominant managerialist ideology which sets the context for restructured levels of the teaching force and redesigned patterns of progression. Standards form an essential element of the technology of performance management in specifying skills defined as valuable and amenable to measurement. No amount of performance management would be adequate if it did not clarify the value assumptions which underpin it nor grapple with its implications for patterns of social justice and differentiation. The paper explores these two dimensions. It also illustrates the contours of proposals contained in the United Kingdom's Green Paper in relation to the reactions of teachers, unions, governing bodies, local education authorities, and others. Section 1 presents "Background to the Green Paper, Performativity in Practice." Section 2 discusses "The Roots of Performance Management." Section 3 highlights "Nature and Definitions of Performance Management." Section 4 examines "Further Concerns Surrounding Performance Management" (e.g. defining values, principles, and criteria; equity issues; and a changing configuration of professionalism). (Contains 49 references.) (SM)

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What a Performance: reshaping teaching in England

Pat Mahony and Ian Hextall

> ... there is never a gap. I mean from half past seven to half past five I'm working every day without a break plus marking at home if I've had a meeting in the afternoon, which I have at least two afternoons, sometimes three a week. So that's ten hours a day five days a week, plus marking. And that's just to manage what I have to do. That's not anything else. I mean I'm also responsible for record-keeping and assessment in school, ... (Primary school teacher)

> ... there's a big silence in the whole Green Paper ... about contact time - that to me is the real problem with the "something for something model" - it doesn't account for the fact that most teachers are already giving everything. (LEA policy officer)

This paper is set in the context of the proposal by the UK government to introduce a 'performance management' policy as a basis on which to organise the management and remuneration of teachers in England. The performance management model envisaged is firmly embedded within the dominant managerialist ideology which sets the context for restructured levels of the teaching force and redesigned patterns of progression. 'Standards' form an essential element of the technology of performance management in specifying skills defined as valuable and supposedly amenable to measurement. No account of performance management would be adequate which did not clarify the value assumptions which underpin it, nor grapple with its implications for patterns of social justice and differentiation. We shall explore both of these dimensions. Furthermore, as has been discovered in other sectors and countries which have endeavoured to introduce such policies, some of the proposals contained in the Green Paper have generated a storm of controversy and opposition. We shall illustrate the contours of this in relation to the reactions of teachers, unions, governing bodies and local education authorities, and others.

BACKGROUND TO THE GREEN PAPER, PERFORMATIVITY IN PRACTICE'

The Green Paper which was published in December 1998 (DfEE 1998a) announced the Labour Government's firm intention to introduce a thorough-going performance management model to form the basis for the overall restructuring of the teaching profession within schools. The Green Paper establishes a quite explicit marker as to the direction in which the government would like to travel in its project to 'modernise' the teaching profession. In its form it looks both backwards to a whole swathe of initiatives begun under the previous Conservative administrations, and forwards with the particular orientations of Tony Blair's government. While some of the parts may be familiar, the overall assemblage constitutes something new for teachers. A great deal of the 'devilish detail' of the Paper is as yet to be resolved and it will be some time before the outcomes and impacts of the various strands and elements of the policy emerge.

In order to achieve a 'new professionalism', teaching is to undergo a process of 'modernisation'. In a set of measures heralded as giving 'something for something' the proposals include:

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- an increase in the number of teaching assistants;
- the introduction of annual appraisal;
- professional development and performance related pay underpinned by a National framework of standards for: the award of QTS (the first mandatory gateway); completion of induction (the second mandatory gateway); movement through the performance threshold to gain access to a higher pay spine; award of AST grade and award of NPQH (see list of abbreviations at end).

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- a 'fast-track' procedure to identify 'high-fliers' who could move more rapidly through the school hierarchy.

Movement through the threshold will be accomplished by evaluation against the relevant standards, undertaken by headteachers, moderated by nationally trained, external assessors.

Some of what is described here will feel very familiar to some international colleagues. This raises the question as to whether the movements currently taking place in England are symptomatic of wider, global trends. It is an ongoing question of where, if at all, there may be points of convergence now or in the future and the extent to which such difference is merely illusory. We have found it important, in trying to compare the English situation with that of elsewhere to pay attention to the basis on which comparison is being made. It may be, for example, that the regulatory and inspection framework (eg. via OfSTED) and its mode of operation is unique but the functions it is designed to undertake may well be replicated elsewhere.

When the Green Paper proposals were introduced, the government was somewhat shaken by the scale of the responses it received to its consultation, and by the vehemence of some of the responses.[2] Early on, the timetable for implementation became disorganised and serious anxieties were expressed from within the system about the financial, regulatory, legal and logistical 'state of readiness'. This continues. Even as we write headteachers are receiving training in how to undertake the threshold assessments which have to be completed by July 2000. However they cannot begin this process until school governors have agreed a performance management policy and to date governing bodies have received neither training nor documentation for this.

THE ROOTS OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

It is important to emphasize that the roots of performance management lie deep in the private sector and that it was moved into the public sector as a key element in the managerialist restructuring of the public services during the 1980s and 1990s. In England we now find that there are performance management systems at work in almost all areas of the public service, for example, health, housing, tax collection, employment services, local authority provision, as well as the private sector (Armstrong and Baron 1998; Rogers 1999). Under the Labour government the White Paper *Modernising Government* (Cabinet Office 1999a) demonstrates a clear will to continue in these directions. It is in this context that the Green Paper is located.

> Pay must be flexible and put service needs first. This means reforming outdated systems by tackling aspects which make insufficient contribution to performance. It means challenging outdated assumptions, for example, the idea that 'fair pay' means everybody should get the same increase, or that pay and conditions must all be set nationally. It involves introducing greater flexibility for local managers to set pay and conditions in accordance with local needs, where appropriate within national frameworks. (para. 28, p. 8)

And again:

> The Modernising Government White Paper made clear that a person's pay should reflect their output, results and performance. This means that those who contribute most - whether they are teams or individuals - should be best rewarded, and that systems which give automatic pay increases to poor or inefficient performers should be challenged. This is a continuing theme of pay reforms proposed by government across the public sector. (DfEE 1999b para. 30 p. 8)

Modernising Government also makes it clear that policy decisions should be based on sound evidence.

> This Government's declaration that "what counts is what works" is the basis for the heightened interest in the

> part played by evidence in policy making. ... The raw ingredient of evidence is information. Good quality policy making depends on high quality information, derived from a variety of sources - expert knowledge; existing domestic and international research; existing statistics; stakeholder consultation; evaluation of previous policies; new research, if appropriate; or secondary sources, including the internet. Evidence can also include analysis of the outcomes of consultation, costings of policy options and the results of economic or statistical modelling. To be as effective as possible, evidence needs to be provided by, and/or be interpreted by, experts in the field working closely with policy makers. (Cabinet Office 1999b para. 7.1, p. 31)

These claims concerning evidence sit somewhat uncomfortably with the determination of the government to drive ahead with 'performance management' despite the weight of evidence which points to its negative potential. Commenting specifically on the performance related pay element of the proposals, Richardson says:

> In an earlier report I concluded that the attempts to employ a whole variety of individual performance related pay schemes in the UK public sector had not been a notable success. About a dozen different studies of their impact all conclude that only small minorities of public sector employees report any sense of enhanced motivation from performance related pay, while much larger numbers perceive that it leads to jealousies among employees and to a reduction in trust between employees and management.
>
> These outcomes are not accidental. Rather, they reflect either the intrinsic unsuitability of individual performance related pay for many parts of the public sector, or design faults in the ... schemes actually adopted, or problems in the way that potentially successful schemes are actually implemented. (Richardson 1999 p. 1)

In addition, a Swedish colleague told us of his experiences over the preceding two years:

> We introduced this system of merit pay a couple of years ago in Sweden at the Universities. Now when these were introduced, they were all tied to saying that this would raise efficiency. ... as far as I know there exists no single study that proves or that can even produce the slightest hint of evidence that merit pay has increased production in schools or in Universities. Now I'm talking about another source of knowledge, ... from my position in the University where I have to deal with this, I can say that I have seen no positive evidence whatsoever but I have seen a lot of negative evidence which I can point to very precisely.

He went on to catalogue these as:

> ... merit pay creates the culture of silence - I'm not going to share my ideas with you because you might go off and do something. It creates a lot of idiotic discussions of – did you recognize what I have done there – why didn't you take it in – why does he get £5 more than me, 10 crowns, 100 crowns or whatever. Totally meaningless discussion which all show mistrust and envy. Second, merit pay tends to promote the salary aspects of your work, namely it craves visibility. This has two consequences. It changes the nature of work itself so that it is recognised by someone, so it creates boot-licking. This leads to promoting everything that is conformist and the person, the unmarried white male who is seen after school hours, leaving traces of his sweat. Is that what we want to promote? And it strengthens the administrators' power who are suddenly those whose boots it's most necessary to lick. It's an administrative decision which in its essence gives more power to the administrators. That's all it does, gives more power to the administrators.

Also, in terms of the emphasis laid on 'leadership' in the Green Paper, research evidence suggests that:

> ... lack of systematic evaluation means that many top managers' views are not based on sound evidence. ... effects are quite complex, and the points at which problems emerge may be far removed from where the basic problems lie. (Marsden and French 1998 p. 2)

Despite such reservations performance management constitutes a key element of a managerially driven version of Human Resource Management in which:

> [F]or some managers in local government, and indeed for some politicians in central as well as local government, 'performance' appear to have achieved an almost magical significance, and has led to the creation not just of Performance Management but also performance reviews, performance audits, performance plans and performance appraisals. (Rogers 1999 p. 1)

One of its strongest legitimating devices lies in the presumption that you can move systems of personnel management across from context to context, and that the basic principles and working assumptions remain the same. It is depicted in a technicist form as a 'free-floating technology' capable of being applied in diverse contexts and where the nature of context-specificity is deemed of less relevance than techno-universality. In this sense it works within a universalistic paradigm which accords well with certain deterministic versions of globalisation. A corollary of this universalistic presupposition is the presumption that problems encountered within performance management are issues of presentation, logistics and technique. This was evident in the response which the government made to the consultation resistance it encountered, when it defined most of the problems as issues to be resolved through further adaptation and negotiation. Managerialist ideologies are fundamentally grounded in the notion that there exist sets of principles and procedures which can be applied to bring about 'effective, efficient and economic' modes of operation. Of course, these have to be applied in specific contextual circumstances that have to be taken into account in devising effective operational procedures, but the working presumption is that the general principles are pre-eminent and circumstances subsidiary. This is a highly contentious and value-laden point since to most people 'on the ground' it is precisely 'context' which gives meaning and flavour to their actions and lives. Consequently, the 'context' within which schools are placed is crucial as providing the starting point within which one works. We find this referred to again and again in the public policy literature and peoples' experiences, and it is emphasized in terms of local government by Rogers (1999), writing as a 'critical friend' of the performance management movement.

> While performance management aims to increase the capacity of councillors and managers to determine and manage the performance of their own affairs it is being applied in an environment where both the definition of performance and the operational processes for achieving that performance are being increasingly determined not just by central government but by wholly or partly autonomous audit and inspection agencies. Rather than encouraging an approach of self-reliance, responsibility and creativity they are likely to produce a culture of compliance and conformity - with worrying consequences. Performing becomes mere conforming. (p. 24)

As an extension to this, little recognition is accorded to issues of structure, power and conflict which are ever-present in social contexts such as schools but are wished away, or rendered invisible in managerialist accounts (Angus 1994; Mahony and Hextall 1997c).

As an approach, performance management also has deeply totalizing characteristics. For example, workers (teachers in our case) are presented as units of labour to be distributed and managed. The characteristics of these labour units are deemed largely irrelevant providing that they comply with certain specifications and meet particular

working criteria. This renders the structural characteristics of groups of teachers (or other workers), such as ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and class, marginal and discrimination invisible. Thus, for example, the Green Paper makes no mention of, say, gender or ethnicity in its proposals. Placing this point more generally within management theory, Hartley (1997) writes:

> People are thereby regarded as a resource, to be managed, efficiently. (On this, note how personnel officers are currently being redefined as human resource managers. They must therefore 'record' people as information which can be managed, as a resource.) All this is to say that the performativity, efficiency-seeking principle is thereby rendered almost as commonsense. The effect of this would be the 'suppression' of difference. (p. 128 emphasis in original)

Rather it speaks the language of 'all' teachers, which given the mal-distribution of equal opportunities available to teachers, renders this apparent language of inclusivity potentially socially excluding. It is also totalizing in its reliance on fundamentally individualistic notions of motivation, achievement, performance and progression.[3] Once again its basic operating unit is that of the individual, ambitious for their future, jealous of their achievements and personally motivated in their orientation to teaching. There have, of course, always been teachers (and academics, and even , perhaps, politicians) like this. But what these proposals do is to elevate this version of being a teacher above a version that stresses team-work, collaborative practice and a communitarian, non-competitive orientation. In doing this it takes it as axiomatic that the individualistic model will prove to be more 'efficient, effective and economical' in relation to its outcomes. Time and again the teachers we interviewed drew us back to this issue.

> ... I think teaching is a sort of collegial profession where you give of yourself and you share with your colleagues and that's what you're actually imparting to children as well, that you learn together. (Primary school teacher)

> I would say, very competitive, very ambitious people will perhaps use the situation if it's presented to them. (Primary school teacher)

These comments suggest that either the restructuring envisaged for the profession will flounder because it goes against the grain of what it means to teach successfully or that it will succeed by dint of creating 'changes in the way public servants approach their work, and think about the use of the resources at their disposal' (Marsden and French 1998 p. 1). Once again the teachers we interviewed gave voice to an awareness of these transformative demands.

> I think there's a tension between a school of thinking that's very much to do with youngsters and learning and teaching, and managerial systems that's to do with demonstrating efficiency and productivity and so on. I don't think they always sit terribly happily together. (Secondary school teacher)

And again:

> ... being measured, performance indicators ... are to do with being a good bureaucrat, being able to show how you've matched targets. That's not matching the target, it's showing how you've matched the target and I think that's in one sense the real difficulty with the bureaucratic system we're under. And also, that we're being very narrowed in our teaching, ... You're in a very tight scenario about how it's being prescribed that you should teach these things. That's incredibly frustrating, demotivating and also I would have thought demoralising for quite a percentage of teachers. (Headteacher)

One of the major teaching unions in its response to the Green Paper was quite clear about the hierarchical and divisive presumptions it sees underpinning the performance related pay element of the government's proposals:

> ... [Performance management] attracts the Government because the premise of payment and reward for excellence and improvement is predicated on it being discriminatory. By definition, not all will fulfil the predetermined criteria. There will be gateways, hurdles and thresholds. A minority will be paid more - perhaps a great deal more - others, a majority , will not. (NUT 1999, para. 59)

Parenthetically, the individualising orientation also drives directly to the heart of collective models of organising and protecting teachers, their rights, conditions of service and rewards. Insofar as unions are left with a role within such a model it is to patrol the boundaries of the system to ensure that the practices are conducted in accordance with the established procedures. They are by default themselves painted into an individualistic rather than collectivist purpose vis a vis their members.

NATURE AND DEFINITIONS OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Getting a clear definition of performance management can prove elusive. What many people provide is a description of the various elements which go to make up an overall account of the technology involved in operating a performance management model or regime. As Ironside and Seifert (1995) say of performance management:

> ... unitarist management ... treats neither the subject nor the process as problematic. All that is left, perhaps, therefore is to describe the functions and activities and skills and then provide some anecdotal examples. (pp. 137-138)

From an avowedly managerialist perspective Helen Murlis (1992) at least places some of the major elements which ground performance management clearly within its Human Resource Management home.

> One of the major lessons emerging ... is the need for effective performance management to underpin the pay system. A good working definition of performance management is that it is "the process which links people and jobs to the strategy and objectives of the organisation". Good performance management is about operating a process which increases the likelihood of achieving performance improvements. Current thinking in this area indicates that management needs to be practised by the integrated operation of four processes ... planning for performance, managing performance, appraising performance and rewarding performance. (p. 65)

In his comprehensive review of the field, drawn from private and public sectors, Rogers concludes that:

> Perhaps the major weakness of the many attempts to implement Performance Management has been that it has been perceived only as a set of individual and often poorly related techniques. (p. 10)

Addressing the same issue of definition, Ironside and Seifert once again bring a markedly more critical orientation to their interpretation of the management of human resources. As they say:

> One general view of the emergence of HRM as an important part of the management of British enterprises in the 1990's suggests that it, in all its forms, simply represents a modern version of managing resources in a recession. ... The dominant slogan for managers in the private sector is 'more for less', that is productivity

and/or efficiency gains at all costs. If this is the case, in crude terms, then an important issue for the management of recession in public services becomes the implementation of the necessary changes with the minimum of opposition. The main features of the changes based on this model include work intensification, deskilling and lower unit labour costs through reductions in staffing levels and/or lower relative rates of total remuneration. One possible way to minimise opposition to these changes is to try to convince staff of the benefit and/or inevitability of the changes, and this is achieved through isolating staff as individuals and seeking to convince them of the correctness of this new model management. (p. 136)

What becomes apparent from such a reading of the theory and practice of performance management is that it has implications at a number of different levels: the personal; the institutional; the systemic, and the societal. However the boundaries and interconnections between these are all too often smudged and presumptions are smuggled in that there is no tension or dissension in moving across analytical boundaries. Perhaps the classic illustration of this lies in the implicitly invoked presupposition that what is good for the system is good for the individual - 'what's good for General Motors is good for the USA' as the old saying goes. Also, any thoroughgoing analysis of performance management would need to take account of a variety of different lenses and standpoints which, in relation to education, would include:

- learning, teaching and pedagogic perspectives;
- professional/union perspectives;
- managerial/economistic perspectives;
- technical/ logistical perspectives;
- equity/social justice perspectives;
- social/political perspectives.

The official discourse of performance management, as exemplified for instance in the Green Paper, slides across these perspectives without any break of stride. Differentiating between perspectives in this way may serve an important analytical function: by revealing ways in which only certain kinds of perspectives are pulled into play in official discourse whilst others are side-lined or completely ignored; by providing a basis for distinguishing between, and/or pulling together critical features derived from different levels or perspectives and which are held in separation.

The following quotation from Marsden and French, themselves quite critical of the principles and practice of performance management, reveal the subtlety of the controversies accompanying this managerial strategy and stress the need for secure analytical critique:

> From the mid-1980s, the British public services have led the world in pioneering new performance management systems. Major changes in management information systems have been introduced with a view to clarifying management's goals, and to analysing the efficiency with which resources are used in achieving them. ... Although in public debate much has been made of the 'ideological' motivation of Mrs. Thatcher's and John Major's governments, the high cost of public services in the national budgets of all countries, and the increasingly complex demands placed on them by their citizens, have been at least as important a driving force behind the reforms. It is almost certainly the latter which explain the world-wide interest in the success or otherwise of Britain's public service reforms. (p. 1)

Clearly there are no 'innocent readings' in this area. We would argue that for our purposes the following elements are of importance in grasping the significance of performance management. First, it is presented as a way of delivering the purposes and outcomes of the organisation in a way which is transparent and explicitly communicated. Second, from

the viewpoint of the management as stakeholders, it enables them to identify and differentiate between participants in terms of the contribution they make to the achievement of these purposes and outcomes. In doing this it enables a more 'effective' distribution of the reward, training and progression resources of the organisation to enhance its capacity to meet established objectives and respond to the demands of change. Profitability, productivity, efficiency, value-addedness, and value-for-money are clearly key concepts in this respect. Third, for the employee, performance management is claimed to provide a clear specification as to what is expected, the targets/standards/criteria to be met and the rewards and other benefits which will result from meeting them. It should also enable an employee to see where their contribution fits within the overall vision or scheme of the organisation. Further to this an effective performance management system should articulate with training or professional development provision and this in turn should mesh with the organisational models of progression and promotion (See also Lawn, 1995). Taken together all of these are founded on an organisational 'map' which locates people in various positions within the structure, clarifies the expectations attached to these positions, charts the dynamics of the relationships between the positions and specifies the potential lines of progression which exist between them. Fourth, in relation to the public sector, the situation is patently different from that within the private sector. We shall return to some of the detail later, however, for the government in its role as 'super-purchaser' of public services the great promise offered by performance management lies in reductions in public sector expenditure, and hence taxation levels, and the greater visibility of precisely how public resources are being distributed and to what effect. In short, it provides a proxy bottom-line accountability comparable to the private sector, and also conveys the image of the government operating as a responsible and rational 'consumer' on our behalf. All of this is centrally driven whilst presented within a culture of decentralization, delegation and disaggregation of 'institutional decision-making autonomy' to smaller units of delivery. But as Paul Hoggett (1996) has said:

> ...the British experience indicates that steering by use of incentives and sanctions and the setting of meta-level rules (what DiMaggio and Powell (1983) call "the power to set premises") can be an extremely effective form of "hands-off" control, indeed probably much more powerful than "hands-on" regulation and direction. (p. 25-26)

FURTHER CONCERNS SURROUNDING PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

There are many different sources to which one could turn for analysis of 'performance management' both as an ideology and as a set of working practices. We have already alluded to some of the important analytical comments which are made about performance management. Illuminating though they are, we cannot here hope to rehearse all the detailed questions about procedures, logistics, resourcing, timing, duties, responsibilities, training procedures, appraisal mechanisms and so on, around which so many practitioners, unions and professional associations have expressed deep gloom.[4] As the Professional Association of Teachers concluded its response to the Green Paper quoting one of its members:

> The overly complicated and bureaucratic procedures proposed will make the headteachers' and senior managers' lives a nightmare. The proposals are, quite simply, unworkable! (PAT 1999 para. 59)

Marsden and French introduce a rather sanguine view of the relationship between pay and performance which sits uneasily with the speed and lack of forward planning with which the government are currently proceeding:

> ... although at first sight tying pay to performance may appear a simple and logical process, in practice there is a large number of problems that management has to overcome. ...The complexity of the linkages between pay and performance are such that only well-thought out schemes have any chance of success. (p. 4)

The NAHT make a comparable point when they say:

> The Government is proposing to introduce the world's biggest performance management system without a proper structure to support it. The Green Paper gives the clear impression that it has not grasped the enormity of the exercise or the preconditions, including full costs, which must be met for its success. (NAHT 1999, p. 21)

In the light of such comments we are led to question if performance management is anything but a 'sophisticated' device for restructuring the pay element within the education budget? By claiming to operate a rational and transparent system of pay for performance which is founded on the notion of 'something for something' does it in effect achieve the purpose of getting 'more for less'? The SHA makes it quite clear how it interprets these questions:

> SHA questions whether a system of performance related pay, such as that proposed for teachers, exists in any other profession. Such schemes have been seen to demotivate employees in other fields, especially where the scheme rest upon an inadequate general salary level or is cash-limited, and many schemes in the private sector have been abandoned. (SHA 1999, para. 5)

One of our interviewees showed concern about the impact of what in the general literature is often described as the quota system:

> ... the teacher lets the head know that he or she wants to be considered for assessment and thereafter builds up the record for the portfolio of evidence ... the head teacher would say, that's splendid and you're really doing well but actually we haven't got any more money so you can build up your portfolio if you like but it might be a waste of time. But you also need, of course, the external assessor involved to moderate or to validate the head's judgment even if the go ahead is given. I think that's a main issue, where this billion pounds over two years, an absolutely splendid sum of money to make available, but what happens after the two year period is still a bit unclear. (LEA officer)

An officer whom we interviewed from a non-education sector union with long experience in the performance management field summarised the quandary as follows:

> ... the current system isn't working because you've almost got the situation where the performance appraisal system is being driven by the pay system rather than the other way round which was never the intention. Their sort of broad view is that performance pay should support the performance appraisal system. We're arguing that in reality it's turned out to be the other way round and that by linking it to pay it's actually discredited performance management and it's actually obscured or hindered the objectives of performance management system because of the link to pay it's led to you know, people aren't confident that it's being operated in a fair manner ... If we look at appraisal which is a key element within the performance management system that appraisal process could connect to a number of different subsidiary things. It could connect to staff development. It could connect to identifying training needs. It could connect to meeting certain specified targets or standards or levels of competence. It could connect to models of promotion and progression. And it could connect to pay. ... driving by pay does a disservice or deflects from the value or the contribution that the other elements could make to the appraisal process.

There are also criticisms directed at assumptions being made about what motivates teachers and enables them to

improve. There are fears that the demotivating effect for the majority of teachers will far outweigh the rewards for the few unless significantly more money is made available on a long term basis to enable the majority to achieve the higher scales. Related to this are concerns that what motivates teachers is not simply money (though no-one has yet claimed that teachers could do with less of it). Even if individual self-interest were the over-riding motivator (rather than a professional commitment to doing the best job possible) it has been pointed out that the proposals may turn out to be self-defeating in respect of the system as a whole (Storey 2000). Put bluntly, why would I share my good ideas with you when you might use them to achieve progression through the system over me? The concern is that good educational practice or innovative teaching, far from becoming shared amongst a school staff will be seen as a personal commodity to be sold in the internal market of the school.

> I just think it is going to incredibly divisive, ... people come into school and instead of sharing all your ideas and sharing everything that you do, I think it is just going to end up with people keeping everything for themselves and feeling, well if I'm going to good results then I'm going to get it for me. (Primary school teacher)

On the other hand this teacher felt that the majority of teachers are not motivated in ways presupposed by policy makers

> I mean how many teachers are going to sit there, gosh I'm super, I'm going to go for that? Most teachers are in it for the job. They are not there to blow their own trumpet. And I don't know that those that should be recognised will ever get recognised. (Primary school teacher)

The potential implications of this for relations between staff within schools and between schools and their constituent communities are well summarised by these comments from the NUT:

> The Government's proposals ... would profoundly damage the professional culture of co-operation and teamwork that is at the heart of successfully managed schools. The pressures caused by the performance management structure and the tensions between assessors and assessed would generate distrust and counter-productive competition between colleagues. In particular, serious divisions would develop between teachers separated by their success or failure in 'passing' the threshold.
>
> These differences would be exacerbated by their inevitable visibility to pupils - and to parents. Parental pressure would build for pupils to be taught by teachers who had passed. Anxiety and objections would build where pupils were taught by teachers who had not reached, had decided not to apply or, worse, had been failed in their applications. (NUT 1999, paras. 14/15)

One of our teacher interviewees expressed these concerns in almost identical terms:

> I think it makes a two-tier system. I think people who don't move through the threshold are going to feel that they are being looked at and thought, why not, why haven't you applied. Do you think you wouldn't be able to achieve it and so people who are in that position are going to feel like a second-class citizen. ... And there's no point in saying people don't know because there are parents on the Governing Bodies and things do get out, you know. (Primary school teacher)

Since we cannot hope to engage with the full range of these issues we are limiting ourselves to four major general controversies.

DEFINING VALUES, PRINCIPLES AND CRITERIA: ISSUES OF QUALITY AND QUANTITY

This is a key issue because it is on the basis of these that all of the other issues hang. Almost all contemporary analysts are keen to point out the vital significance of creating an agreed value framework within which to operate. Echoing the developmental/regulatory distinction we have drawn elsewhere (Mahony and Hextall 2000), Rogers depicts performance management as potentially an element of a reflexive or learning process for institutions and individuals. He also points to the democratic implications of such an orientation.

> Performance Management is not just a process for ensuring that public service organisations and their employees are well placed to produce the performance which society requires of them, it is also part of the process by which performance itself is defined, by which criteria of performance are established and by which societal, political and managerial judgments are made of those who are performing. (p. 3)

If performance management is to have a significance beyond the narrow question of performance-related-pay then the overall value system within which the whole framework is to be located needs to be negotiated. This also has to be something to which employees feel that they can express a commitment otherwise it will not succeed in motivating and encouraging their commitment. Within the private sector this value framework can (arguably) be limited to material factors, for example, profitability, turnover or productivity and the criteria used within the performance management framework can reflect this value structure. This is clearly not the case in the public sector generally, where:

> Determining the relevant dimensions of performance has been a major area of controversy across the public services as staff and their representatives have often argued that quantity is being stressed at the expense of quality... deciding on valid criteria for performance measurement management is ... much more than a simple technical issue, but one which relates to people's beliefs about the goals of the service they work for. ... a great many staff are strongly committed to a certain idea of public service, and there is much disagreement about the suitability of the targets chosen by management. (Marsden and French 1998 pp.5-6)

There are echoes here of Australian experience where Smyth and Shacklock (1998) describe how professional discourses of teachers were often felt to clash with the managerially oriented manner in which the standards for ASTs were couched. They illustrate how the construction of the evidence base for application took so much time that it actually diverted teachers' time and attention away from the very thing that they were good at. They argue that such an approach can hence become counter-productive as an initiative because of its transference of energies. One of the primary school teachers we interviewed expressed this dilemma very cogently. Originally this teacher had worked in the financial sector and had been attracted to teaching:

> ... because I wanted to give of myself. I wanted to be fulfilled. I mean at the end of the day, (finance management) is how much profit can you make on a packet of soap and that wasn't fulfilling me. So while I'm with the children, I really enjoy teaching.

But the changes that are now in train mean that as far as this teacher is concerned:

> I'm giving less of myself to the children and giving more of it to pieces of paper... I don't want to give up teaching because I love the ... gleam in their eyes and that sort of thing. And yet you sort of think, well why am I doing this. Because you're working on Sundays. You're working in the evenings. I'm in at seven o'clock you know, and you think, this is lunacy. ... am I going to be doing this – I can't see myself doing this for the next twenty years. I really can't. And if I'm going to be pushing paper and doing lots of paperwork, I might as well get

paid for it, you know. (Primary school teacher)

One of our interviews was with a headteacher who regularly advised or inspected in other schools nationally. This very experienced and dynamic head of a stable, successful school said that one of the things which caused staff concern was:

> ... the extent to which teachers feel they no longer control their own working lives. Increasingly, there are sets of regulations and requirements and expectations built around those teachers who are at the peak of their professional expertise and yet who don't have the autonomy to define how they work.

In their response to the Green Paper ATL made the following trenchant point under the heading of 'shared professional criteria'.

> ATL has previously warned against the damaging effect of alterations to appraisal which would make it seem to teachers as little more than an assessment of them by others over which they have little control as to its direction or outcomes. (ATL 1999 p. 6)

As we have indicated in greater detail in our forthcoming book, the generation, form and content of the NPS have been and continue to be the subject of intense debate. Defining what is to count as an appropriate outcome in education is difficult enough, finding indices which adequately capture these outcomes is yet more difficult, and developing devices with which to appraise achievement of these outcomes is of yet another order. Certainly this cannot be adequately accomplished by imposing a preordained template and then claiming to have resolved the problem. There is a genuine problem as to attempting to identify the particular contribution, say to a pupils' performance, which is contributed by any given teacher rather than by a whole history of teachers. There are also real issues about the significance of external factors which are quite literally beyond any school's or teacher's control. Further than this there are legitimate questions to resolve about the extent to which certain key educational values are amenable in principle to conventional appraisal procedures and necessitate quite differently formulated procedures, for example collective appraisal, peer appraisal and community involvement. To take such a critical stance is not a flight from rigour but a redesignation of its constituent properties.

EQUITY ISSUES

The procedures and practices of, for instance, appraisal, constitute the dynamics through which the *positions* designated within the performance management structure get populated. In doing this they accomplish both a distributional and relational function at one and the same time (See Gewirtz 1998). A range of concerns have been expressed that the implementation of the system will be inconsistent and unfair. Although at a common sense level it seems legitimate that people who work harder should receive greater rewards, in practice there are a host of logistical problems. For example, despite the apparent transparency of appraising staff against National Standards, in practice interpretation of the Standards means that judgment is always going to be a subjective process, grounded partly in the needs of the school as well as on the perceived talents of the individual teacher concerned. Australian evidence (Down, et al. 1997; Smyth and Shacklock 1998) has indicated that those who 'succeed' are likely to be be those in possession of 'valuable' (policy enhanced) skills, for example, ICT capability. Leaving aside questions of favouritism or the tendency of managers to over-rate their own staff in an effort to retain them, those who have experienced the enhanced pay element of performance management seem less than sanguine about its supposed transparency. A letter to the *Times Educational Supplement* (July 23rd 1999) read:

> As someone who has worked under a performance pay system for the whole of the 1990s, I would reassure teachers that performance-related pay will be nothing as simple as a crude relationship between results and payments.
> Payments there will be, for some, but such is the complexity of PRP, no one will know why they did or did not get the money. (Keith Flett p. 16)

Related to this is the concern that those groups who have traditionally suffered discrimination within the labour market will experience even greater difficulty in negotiating the hoops and hurdles integral to the system being proposed. The social justice implications of the 'new regime' of performance management for teachers, for the teaching profession as a whole and for the social and political contextualisation of education calls for a fully fledged research agenda in its own right. For the moment we simply signal that this issue has been a major concern of the teaching unions:

> ... The increase in discretion on pay decisions at the school level and the concentration of power over such decisions in the hands of the headteacher are not likely to promote fair and equitable pay decisions based on equal opportunities considerations. (NUT 1999, para. 94 p. 10)

As we have indicated there is no explicit reference to a recognition of equity distribution, eg. by ethnicity or gender, as significant in patterns of progression and promotion.[5] Nor, in the technical documents accompanying the Green Paper is there, as yet, any reference to the skills required to monitor or deliver an equal opportunities element within the performance management model. This is despite the fact that, as the NUT argues, evidence in other occupational areas:

> ... suggests that those points in the PRP system where management bias and subjectivity can enter - the appraisal, and the subsequent translation of the performance rating into a pay award - are the areas where discrimination can and will occur. (NUT 1999, para. 157 p.18)

Indeed the NASUWT are even more helpful in their tutoring of the government - devoting a whole section of their consultation response to an analysis of the 'Proposals vulnerable to discriminatory impact'.

> It is highly regrettable that equality issues are not addressed, particularly when within the teaching profession there are recognised, significant imbalances in gender, race and disability. Consequently, as this factor is not acknowledged within the proposals, no system is set out to ensure discrimination does not occur in their application or to prevent the current imbalances being perpetuated or aggravated. (NASUWT 1999 para. 6.2 p. 24)

It is worthy of note that at no point in its detailed submission to the pay review body (STRB) does the DfEE deem it significant enough to make any reference to the issue of equal opportunities. One is forced to wonder whether such questions are seen as unimportant or somehow outside their zone of responsibility, or perhaps they have simply 'overlooked' them (Gillborn 1999; Mahony and Hextall 2000).

THE CHANGING WORK OF TEACHING

For all teachers the Green Paper maps the broad contours of the way in which the occupation of teaching is being structurally 'modernised'. This makes it possible to envisage a fairly coherent account of the possible shape of a person's career in teaching from the point of entry through the various different stages through which they could travel

if they were to spend their working lives in teaching and wished to pursue progression. As yet it is an open question as to what differences (and of what kind) will result for teachers working in different types of school. The consequences for individual teachers who decide not to enter into this model of career progression are not known nor whether this is even a choice that individuals will be able to sustain. It may be that obligations on teachers to undertake such moves become informally established, especially if a school's 'marketability' can be improved by the number of 'threshold teachers' it employs. In terms of policy outcomes, it also remains to be seen the extent to which the proposed changes constitute a genuinely radical transformation of the existing situation in terms of what proportions of the profession are envisaged as occupying the new positions and how these compare with the structural characteristics of teaching which already exist. In marketeers' terms are we in the presence of a massive (and costly) exercise in re-badging or a genuine exercise in cultural and structural re-engineering? If so, it is important to consider who might be the prospective winners and losers in this new shape of teaching. As we have noted, this moves the argument from general considerations of the working conditions under which all teachers operate, through to more specific reviews of the likely impact on particular categories or cohorts of actual or prospective teachers.

What is currently happening in education and public policy can best be read through an appreciation of the 'big picture'. This itself is a complex canvas with globalisation, managerialism and newly emerging patterns of cultural and social diversities at play. Since we are in this paper focusing on the occupational refashioning of teaching we shall add to the complexity by considering contemporary changes in the labour process.

Once we think of teaching as a large body of employed people then it becomes relevant to articulate the changes which are being put in place with contemporary analyses of the restructuring of work. How, if at all, does what is happening in teaching link to other areas of public sector employment and to other 'professionalised' occupations where it is being claimed that a process of hierarchical restructuring of working conditions and control procedures is occurring? This is leading to the segmentalization of workers into primary, secondary and peripheral elements of the labour force, with all its consequences for social justice. If there are such links, then what are the implications for the control and regulation of teaching and for the nature of what this means teachers can and cannot do in their everyday work? Why are these changes happening now and why are they taking these forms?

In drawing attention to the common features which exist between the ways teaching and other forms of work are being depicted both within and outside the public sector, we can quickly identify comparable languages, approaches or sets of circumstances frequently being used and referred to. For example, when Christopher Pollitt (1993) wrote:

> Managers now work to create the right 'climate', to encourage identification with corporate goals, high motivation, internalization of 'constructive attitudes'...(p. 24);

he could have been writing about teaching, but equally about other areas of public provision, or a whole raft of commercial organizations in the manufacturing or service sectors. He could also have been referring to work in widely dispersed geographical locations, nationally and internationally. Certain themes recur in discussions about the changing nature and shape of work, although contextual variations are significant for detailed analysis. Of course it makes a difference whether one is working as a teacher, or an ambulance driver, or on the line for a new technology firm. But the language and procedures which frame and define the nature of the activities are beginning to bear striking similarities to each other. As indeed do the statements of principles and values and the techniques of monitoring, evaluation and control. So the language of 'vision', 'mission', 'standards', 'leadership', 'quality', 'value-for-money', 'choice', 'transparency', 'flexibility', 'commitment', and so on can be traced snaking their way across corporate plans, mission statements and institutional charters.

The arguments of Gee, Hull and Lankshear (1996) are apposite here. Although at various points they directly address issues of education, predominantly they direct their attention to a consideration of the impact of 'new

capitalism' on the definition and structure of work and working relationships. In focusing on a high-tech electronics firm in Silicon Valley, USA and a rural village in Nicaragua, their argument uses the concept of 'Discourse' which is:

> ... composed of ways of talking, listening, reading, writing, acting, interacting, believing, valuing, and using tools and objects, in particular settings and at specific times, so as to display or to recognize a particular social identity. ... The Discourse creates social positions (or perspectives) from which people are 'invited' ('summoned') to speak, listen, act, read and write, think, feel, believe, and value in certain characteristic, historically recognizable ways, in combination with their own individual style and creativity. ... Discourses create, produce, and reproduce opportunities for people to be and recognize certain *kinds of people*. (p. 10)

Expressed in these terms it is apparent that the Green Paper and its attendant policy implications constitutes a Discourse. Its presentation, structure and detailed proposals amount to an attempt to reconfigure the ways in which teachers talk about, think and act in relation to their teaching. Within its proposals it further presents a technological apparatus (what Gee, et al. call 'tools and objects') such as standards, appraisal, performance thresholds, inspection frameworks, and so on with which teachers are expected to operate and through which their activities are perceived. The Green Paper also lays out a preferred structure of positions within teaching and provides a guide as to what it would need for someone to make themselves available for such opportunities as may exist. Whilst recognising that this is the way in which persuasion and commitment have always been built and sustained, Gee et al.'s contribution helps us to grasp the complexity and range of the procedures which are currently being put in place across so many diverse fields, the interactions that are at play between cultural, structural, institutional and personal levels of impact, and the intentionally obscured dominance of certain values and goals underpinning the policies. So, for example, within the Green Paper are embedded assumptions about hierarchies, about what counts as evidence for progression, about theories of motivation, about models of teaching/learning and personal relationships, about the balance between individual and collective systems, about compliance and contestation, about visions of and for the future, and so on. Gee et al. are very clear about the obscured yet core tensions inherent in such 'visions' when they say:

> ... the very language that objectifies the ends, goals, and vision of the organization, and which thus underlies the culture of the organization, is *insulting* if spoken directly to the workers/partners ... The problem can be put another way: real commitment and belief, as well as real learning, require that learners be able to engage in genuine dialogue and contestation with viewpoints, but such genuine contestation is ultimately problematic in a business setting where in the end, profit is the goal and the competition is at one's heels. ...(pp. xiii-xiv)

This returns us to the culture of 'competitiveness' to which we have previously referred but additionally it raises two other issues which have figured in our interviews with education workers. Firstly, there is this term 'insulting' which may seem to be somewhat overdrawn. However, in interviews with teachers we found that this was an idea frequently used in their descriptions of how they felt about their exclusion from genuine debate and decision-making and from the opportunity to air their views about the values, principles and practices which should underpin education. They felt that things were being done to them over which they had little say and less control. This was demeaning to their 'professional' knowledge and experience and left them feeling 'off-message' in every sense.

> This year was crunch time for me. I actually didn't want to come back after the holiday because I was thinking, well here we go, numeracy hour now and just when you think you've got a year to consolidate, there's something else new comes in and that has gone home much more this year than any other year I think. And it's made me quite depressed, you know. It's the methodology that's at the root of my problems. It's telling me that you do it this way. But the pace is too great for the children we've got. And you're thinking, well hang on a

minute, they haven't had like four years head start. They've just arrived in the country and they're are coming into this cold. (Primary school teacher)

Issues of compliance and commitment were given a further twist when an attempt by staff to debate with a headteacher why a particular policy was being adopted was met with an unambiguous reminder of the 'ultimately problematic' nature of contestation in the competitive inter-school environment.

> ... the new head came in with a very, very different style entirely. Very much a business manager.... she's always appointed people, I don't think that are necessarily compliant but that will go along with her vision ... there was a lot of anti-feeling in the school about a proposal that staff thought might adversely affect other schools in our area - just a lot of questioning really which she couldn't understand - why people would question it. Why were staff wanting to disadvantage the school, it was almost disloyalty really. The school isn't an active union school - there was only one meeting but that caused tremendous bad feeling and you know, staff that were fronting that meeting were just thought of as totally disloyal and then it became quite unpleasant. ... The person who spoke on behalf of the staff, the head took it as a personal attack ... that person eventually left ... I think it was made clear that there wasn't much of a future there in the promotion stakes. (Secondary school teacher)

As Gee et al. argue the evasions and tensions embedded in the new work regimes create real problems of commitment and loyalty in and for organisations which are increasingly being driven by external and internal competitive demands and ideologies. In the face of what they describe as the 'danger of widespread cynicism' they see contemporary management texts as proposing two solutions:

> ... One solution is 'visionary leadership' ... the second proffered solution to gaining 'over the top' commitment: not visionary leaders but the creation and maintenance in the organization of 'core values' and a culture that induces (socializes) everyone into such values: ... Fast capitalist texts are not simply attempts to describe a reality already in place; they are what we might call 'projective' or 'enactive' texts ... (pp. 31-33)

Both of these strategies can be seen at play in the Discourse around the effective schooling movement and the standards industry. It is also powerful to view a policy document, such as the Green Paper, as a 'projective or enactive' text, namely, as something which is intended to call into being the very institutions, beliefs, and persons which it depicts. As Gee et al. see it, this is what is truly at stake: 'new kinds of people engaged in new social practices' (p. xiv).

Gee et al.'s thesis is not deterministic - debates go on, Discourses clash and individuals insist on mounting challenges. In our research we have found individuals and institutions putting forward quite different visions and interpretations to counter 'official models'. Modifications take place which represent the interventions of quite contradictory value positions, and, on the ground, things are enacted which bear only a tangential connection to the initial intentions. Clark and Newman (1997) capture the politics of this well in their general comments on the discourse of Human Resource Management:

> ... it is also important not to assume that new subjects can simply be read off from new discourses. There are dangers in assuming that the disciplinary and surveillance processes which subject individuals to new forms of power and control are effective. We would want to emphasise that subjects are caught up in the interplay of different, and sometimes conflicting, discourses. ... When we explore how managerialism is enacted in practice ... what we find is a picture of uneven development, variability and complex articulations of old and new regimes. ... issues of consent, compromise and contradiction are important in theorising the process of

change. (pp. 94-95)

On the other hand it is equally important not to romanticise the possibilities of resistance. Debate has often been constructed in ways that make it extremely difficult to find a basis on which to disagree (claims about 'standards' or 'effectiveness', for example) and the democratic and personal tensions involved should not be underestimated.

> ... This indeed is the great dilemma in regard to Discourses: it is difficult to criticize and change them from *within* (they will simply dis-member us) or from *without* (why should they listen to an outsider?). ... A Discourse perspective simply argues that historic sociocultural struggles are enacted by and on people's bodies and minds, often with much pain and injustice. (pp. 13-14)

More general arguments about the nature of contemporary work, in particular changes that are taking place in the nature of the job market, the character of the labour process and the control procedures which are being implemented within that process also help us to understand what has been happening to teaching. The prospective impact of the 'information revolution' on the overall levels of employment, changes in the patterns of segmentation and responsibility within work, and the stability or impermanence of employment once acquired form part of those discussions. Much of the debate in official circles is informed by the implicit realization that there exists a decreasing interrelationship between the 'health' or 'competitiveness' of economies (global, regional, national or local) and high levels of employment within those economies. 'Lean, mean and flexible' and 'downsized' are descriptive terms which are now applied to economies judged to be competitive, efficient and hence, worthy. This is a moral calculus which, whilst not new, has begun to shift to a new consensus. It means that capital no longer 'needs' as much labour as it has done during previous periods of industrialization. Such labour as it continues to require, is 'needed' in a different form, for different periods of employment and under changed social relations of control, production and consciousness (albeit taking variant forms in different areas, different industries and, for example, between public and private sectors of employment).

Whilst our research projects have not been directly focused on the detail of such issues nonetheless we have encountered their reverberations in every aspect of teaching. Teaching is at the heart of the process of the producing and reproducing of the complex technical and social relations which characterize this newly emergent, embryonic world. Teachers are being required to skill generations of learners with what they need to know in order to be useful for employment when it offers itself. They also need to play their part in the acquisition of the behavioural, cultural and social characteristics which will make learners 'ready' for employment, and attuned, in as general a way as possible, to the forms and 'disciplines' of (unpredictable) employment opportunities. Since these new forms and relations of work are going to pose new demands and impose fresh anxieties and discomforts then there are also new patterns of accommodation and assimilation to be accomplished. Teachers have their part to play in preparing the ground and instilling these. But it is also what is happening to teachers in being prepared for that work themselves. It is this which melds together changes in the patterns and forms of training and development of teachers, with the literacy and numeracy hours and with the frenetic concentration on the 'technological fix' of ICT. But it is also this which grounds the differentiation between 'classes' of teachers, their institutions of training and preparation, with structural groups of pupils in their redifferentiated schools. The conditions within which this is located and the nature of the possible engagement with those circumstances is what generates the 'shock of the new'. The cultural and social expectations with which teachers approach their work, and which become part and parcel of the consciousness through which they reflect on and feel about their working lives, have an impact (albeit not deterministic) on the learners with whom they spend those working hours.

> What are the children learning about society when they see teachers engaged in some of the 'compliance

games' reported here? (Woods, Jeffrey, Troman and Boyle 1997 p. 85)

Such ideas on the remaking of consciousness and personal identities through and within changing forms and patterns of work is a refrain which is being picked up within contemporary literature. Catherine Casey (1995), grounding her analysis on a private sector high technology engineering company operating in the USA, examines the linkages between changing work practices and the ways in which people think about themselves and conduct their relationships. She argues that the training packages, language, approaches to staff development and performance models, are becoming increasingly common globally and across occupational sectors. Indeed many of her insights connect closely with experiences we and others have been exploring within education. For example, she says:

> What is happening here is more than an assumption of a corporate organizational role; it is the internalization of the values and practices of the new culture and identification with the company over and above previous occupational identifications as those older forms of identification are displaced. The new culture produces "designer employees". (p. 143)

This possesses more than a passing resemblance to John Smyth and Geoffrey Shacklock's concept of the 'preferred teacher' as an emerging category within schools and education policy. In Catherine Casey's work we also find arguments being established which resonate with the ethnographic literature on the reformulation of teaching and its impact on the sense of identity through which people make sense of their lives and attribute value and worth to them. Thus we find Casey saying on the basis of her detailed ethnographic researches:

> The most obvious and pervasive effect of working in the new culture is a condition of ambivalence. Ambivalence is a manifestation of an incomplete internalization of the new cultural values and behaviour. ... Most (interviewees) express ambivalence in the same breath as they express devotion and commitment... (p. 154)

Working on the basis of equally intensive ethnographies, Woods et al. (1997) express comparable insights on the feelings with which teachers operate:

> In fact, teachers may experience feelings of enhanced professionalism and stress at the same time. What pushes them in one direction or the other, one might argue, is the particular conjuncture of other factors that apply, and the balance between intensification and professionalization, as mediated perhaps through national policy. (p. 165)

As this last quotation suggests, for teachers, as for many other occupations, the concept of 'professionalism' has occupied a key, symbolic place in the attribution of worth and esteem. Clearly the transformations which are currently occurring in the nature of teachers' work will have an impact on this perception of 'professionalism' and its significance. Susan Robertson (1996), writing from the perspective of educational restructuring in New Zealand, makes the following observation which links to many of the issues we have raised:

> The outcome of the reorganisation of teachers' work is increased segmentation for the purposes of organizational flexibility, pedagogical deskilling, a new conception of professionalism linked to managerial activity, the reconstruction of teachers as learner-manager, an expansion of tasks to include management activity, and tighter external controls. ...There is little scope in the promise of professionalism to wrest a degree of autonomy because the crucial margin for determination - that is ideological control - has been

> unceremoniously split from teachers' work ... (pp. 50-51)

In invoking the idea of 'ideological control' she is here using a distinction, developed by Derber (1982), between ideological and technical controls as sources of autonomy.

> The former involves teachers losing control over the goals, objectives and policy directions of their work. The latter refers to a lack of control over the skills, content, rhythm and pace of their work, ... (Robertson, p. 44)

Policy changes over the last decade or more have been increasingly divesting teachers of autonomy in both of these respects and as such have been redrawing the boundaries around the connotations of the idea of teacher professionalism.

A CHANGING CONFIGURATION OF PROFESSIONALISM

Within recent policy texts there has been an abundance of language and concepts relating to 'professional' and 'professionalism'. As Eric Hoyle and Peter John (1995) have said, 'profession', despite the theoretical and conceptual debates which surround it, remains a powerful 'concept-in-use', and as such it persists as an 'object of attention and a component of educational discourse' (pp. 1-2). In the same vein Jenny Ozga (1995) emphasises the point that in order to understand the 'use' of professionalism it cannot be treated as a static or neutral category.

There is currently much debate and an enormous literature about both the reconstruction of professionalism within teaching and the reconstruction of teachers as individual professionals. This literature echoes the divergence between empowered, up-skilled, flexible images of teaching on the one hand and occupational intensification, fragmentation and differentiation on the other. Teachers may experience both the positive and negative aspects of these features at one and the same time. Opportunities for professional development and a structured qualification system may be locked into increasing occupational demands and a requirement that one moves into a supervisory or regulatory role vis a vis one's colleagues. Comparable redefinitions of what it means to be a professional and of the nature of professionalism in the context of high surveillance/low trust are currently receiving much attention throughout the public sector. As with teaching, managerial transformations are raising tensions and contradictions in the very nature of what it means to be a professional within the public sector. Under the impact of changes in the health, social services and probation services, for instance, there has been considerable discussion of the relationship between professional and managerial orientations. Clarke and Newman (1997), for example, provide a detailed account of the processes through which managerialism has reshaped the bureau-professional regimes which had characterised the public services during the era of the welfare-state settlement.

These arguments fit broadly into the general discussion currently underway about issues of deprofessionalism and reprofessionalism. Very broadly the deprofessionalism thesis claims that the professional status of teachers (and other professionals) is being eroded and that the occupational status of teaching is increasingly become indistinguishable from that of other workers. Sometimes this is linked to the removal of bargaining rights of teachers, sometimes to the changes in the working conditions under which teachers 'labour', sometimes to the increasing regimes of control and surveillance which teachers experience, sometimes to the decline in the respect and trust accorded to teachers, and sometimes to a combination of all (and more) of these factors (Grace 1991).

The reprofessionalism argument claims that the changes in the social, economic and political contexts within which teaching is taking place is leading to a redefinition of the nature of contemporary professionalism. There are at least two levels of transformation that can be identified. The changing nature of institutional structures and the internal reshaping of those structures, alters both the definition and status of all of those who work within organisations, including 'professionals'. The second, interconnected, level concerns the way in which the definition and application of the term 'professional' is being reworked by the impact of state activities. Following Larson (1990) Terri Seddon

sees the process of 'reprofessionalization' as a response to changes in the 'structural linkage between scarce resources of knowledge and expertise and scarce resources of status and reward that is endorsed by the state' (Seddon 1997). For public employees this involves an endless negotiation between what it is that professionals can claim to know and be able to do, which in our case has direct relevance in terms of standards and pedagogy, and the positions and reward structures being set in place via the proposed performance management systems. In particular the reworking of the public sector is repositioning the working conditions and locations of many public sector employees who have come to see themselves as occupying professional positions and identities. The central argument underpinning this is that it has always been impossible to separate the notion of 'professional' from the legitimating and regulative activities of the state where professionals have always worked in positions of 'regulated autonomy'(Dale 1982). In consequence what is currently occurring is a contemporary redesignation of the boundaries and form of that relationship. In short, 'professional' continues to be a powerful and evocative 'concept-in-use' but one which is variably 'pulled into play' or 'sidelined' depending upon context and purpose. We can see these shifts operating at the same time within current policy strategies and statements. Thus within the Green Paper and its subsequent documents one gets a gradual dilution, almost to the point of disappearance as we move through from general statements to 'technical' documents of implementation which could be referring to any worker, in almost any context, in almost any occupational sector. Such positive modes of formulation as those which appear in the formative documents of the GTC constitute a genuine and welcome attempt to speak positively and persuasively to teachers and to address them with respect through the language of professionality (DfEE 1997). But at the same time this very notion of profession is being reshaped in terms which are being defined by the government and which predominantly require 'response' from the professionals within those terms of engagement. For example, it is indicative to note the language being used within the substance of the 'objectives' statements above. These are literally formulated as statements rather than invitations to debate or discuss or reflect. Kevin Harris (1994 - quoted in Robertson 1996) draws out the implications of this subtle move when he says:

> ... within this larger process of adopting forms and processes of corporate managerialism, professionals such as teachers are being redefined as straight-out contracted workers subject to direct management and becoming positioned in such a way that their expertise and professional knowledge is decreasingly called upon with regard to decision-making in areas central to the needs and requirements of those whom they teach and serve' (p. 42)

This is an interesting perspective on the notion of a modernised professional, as someone who is both being addressed as a 'professional' but whose responsibilities, powers and rights are designated as lying well outside realms of policy reflection or deliberation. This shift of positioning and status becomes even more evident in the Technical Documents which are intended to translate the visionary image of the Green Paper into the harsh reality of working lives and the performance management system within which they will be experienced. In the *Performance Management Framework for Teachers* (DfEE 1999a), which is intended for heads, LEAs and other governors and employers, a striking feature is the way in which the language of professionalism has almost entirely disappeared. In these documents its usage is so circumscribed that it is almost only used in conjunction with the phrase 'professional development'. In the light of his own reminder that: 'Teacher professionalism is not a fixed idea, it is situational and relational, it has contradictory aspects (progressive and conservative) and it is not homogeneous' (1994 p. 187), Martin Lawn comments that in contemporary terms:

> Professionalism as an employer discourse has almost entirely disappeared; this is a sign of its lack of significance to the new time. The overtones of a responsible group, working with the State, are no longer necessary or even valid. Teacher professionalism is now being redefined as a form of competent labour,

> flexible and multi-skilled; it operates within a regulated curriculum and internal assessment system in a decentralized external school market. The dominant version is now a notion of individual responsibility and incentive reward legitimated by the Citizen's Charter idea of efficient service and performance incentive. (Lawn 1996 pp 112-113)

CONCLUSION

Public sector employees are increasingly working within regimes of performance management. This raises significant contemporary questions about the forms of regulation and control which are embedded within such transformations of occupational relations and their broader consequences for social relations in general. Paul Hoggett (1996) expresses some of the dilemmas in the following quotation:

> The paradox of Britain in the 1990's therefore is the co-existence of an unregulated economy with an excessively regulated public sphere. ... unlike the Utopia of high trust, high skill, participatory firm commitment to quality drawn by some variants of the flexible-specialization thesis, what we seem to be heading towards in both the private and public sectors in the UK is the development of a high output, low commitment work culture in which trust has become a value of the past and where quality counts far less than quantity. ... (p. 28)

Questions of the most enormous democratic significance are being raised by the increasingly porous nature of the relationships between what we used to call the public and private sectors. The boundary lines between these sectors, which have never been water-tight, are becoming increasingly blurred under the impact of privatisation, market relations, deregulation, various forms of devolution and delegation of powers and responsibilities, and the emergence of what is sometimes described as the contract state. Into this catalogue we would now add the performance management system being proposed by the Labour Government as yet another example of this osmosis in which the discourse of 'professionalism' is being used to accomplish the task of redefining both the activity of teaching and the structural relationships between teachers. Such considerations take us well beyond the confines of education policy, let alone the even more specific terrain of teacher education and professional development, but addressing them is critical if there is to be a sustained and informed public debate about 'effective' schooling. Questions about the direction of governance and decision-making in education policy are germane to any discussion on the future shaping of teaching and the teaching 'profession'. It is becoming ever more urgent that robust and representative governance structures are put in place which are capable of rethinking the nature and form of teaching.

NOTES

1. See Yeatman (1994) and Ball (1998) for accounts of the emergence of the 'performative state' and its implications for policy formation and implementation.

2. The citations for the DfEE 'advice' and some of the other submissions can be found in the references at the end of the book. Also see the recent analysis of responses to the Green Paper in Anne Storey's article "A Leap of Faith? Performance Pay for Teachers" to be published in *Journal of Education Policy*.

3. The interaction between the 'self' and transformations in contemporary forms of work and occupational relationships are explored in Clarke and Newman (1997), Casey (1995) and Gee, et al. (1996), and we shall return to them later.

4. See: ATL; NEOST; NAHT; NASUWT; NUT; PAT; SEO; SHA; UCET - all 1999.

5. The draft Threshold Assessment Application Form, currently out for consultation does include an equal opportunities questionnaire to be used for monitoring purposes.Welcome though this is it does not by itself meet the more substantial questions about the lack of a general awareness of the importance of equal opportunity issues.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AST	Advanced Skills Teacher
ATL	Association of Teachers and Lecturers
DfEE	Department for Education and Employment
GTC	General Teaching Council
HRM	Human Resource Management
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
LEA	Local Education Authority
NAHT	National Association of Headteachers
NASUWT	National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers
NEOST	National Employers' Organisation for School Teachers
NPQH	National Professional Qualification for Headship
NPS	National Professional Standards
NUT	National Union of Teachers
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education
PAT	Professional Association of Teachers
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status
SEO	Society of Education Officers
SHA	Secondary Heads Association
STRB	School Teachers Pay and Review Body
UCET	University Council for the Education of Teachers

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